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Food and Home Notes

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CATALOGING - PREP.



If your potatoes have a sweet taste—there is a reason. When potatoes are stored below 40°F for a week or more, some of the starch changes to sugar.

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Did you know that a dozen "small" eggs must weigh at least 18 ounces? "Medium" eggs must weigh at least 21 ounces and "large," at least 24 ounces according to U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Broiling veal? Don't—USDA home economists suggest the higher grades of veal should be roasted and the lower grades should be cooked with moist heat to insure juiciness and good flavor.

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What is whole-wheat or graham flour? It is milled from the whole kernel and contains all the B-vitamins, iron, and other nutrients naturally present in wheat.

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Whole-wheat flour is higher in fat than white flour. It should be stored in a cool place, according to USDA.

—In This Issue:

Page 1The Sunflower
Page 2 & 3Sugar Consumption
Page 4Nutrition Aides

LOOK AGAIN AT

—The Sunflower

You may be hearing more about sunflowers these days due to the rising interest in oil from the sunflower plant. A native of North America, (and the state flower of Kansas) sunflowers were grown by the Indians for food before 1600. An interest in sunflowerseed oil these days has developed because of increasing world demand for edible fats and oils, and the current emphasis on the health benefits of polyunsaturated fatty acids.

Sunflowers were first produced commercially in the United States in 1967—now, expanded sunflower production has grown to 600,000 acres in 1972. Prospects for using sunflowerseed oil in domestic cooking and salad oils, margarine, and shortening are good, according to the Economic Research Service at the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Sunflower seed oil is a good, high quality oil. It is high yellow in color but when refined is a pale yellow, has a pleasant flavor, and compares favorably with other edible vegetable oils. Its odor is distinctive—but not unpleasant. Sunflower meal could also be used by feed manufacturers as a high-protein ingredient in mixed feeds.

SWEETER THAN — Sweet

—Americans Are Eating More Sugar.

If you've heard that Americans are eating more sugar than at any time since early this century—you've heard right. We are eating more of it in refined form, and we are getting much of it in ways that are not even obvious to us, according to scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For instance, the total sugar content of the U.S. diet—that is, sugar from all sources including the naturally-occurring sugar found in many foods as well as that in sirups, honey, beets, and cane—has gone up about 25 percent since the early 1900's.

However, today's consumers seem to have less control over the sugar content in their diets than people did some 60 to 70 years ago. Why? Most of the increase has resulted from greater use of refined sugar in prepared foods and beverages before the products get into the home.

These are some of the conclusions drawn from a study on the level of use of sugars in the United States as conducted by scientists of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. While this data cannot tell us what people actually eat, it can give us a good picture of average per capita consumption at any one time. This type of information is useful for following trends in consumption over a period of years. It also permits an accounting of most of the refined sugar and sweeteners going into prepared convenience-type foods.

Americans are now consuming about 102 pounds of refined sugar per person a year—or about 130 grams per day. More than two-thirds of that amount comes from the various food products and beverages that are commercially prepared outside the home.

—and beverages are often sweet.

Beverages alone (primarily soft drinks) comprise the largest single use of refined sugar, accounting for over one-fifth the total intake of the average American diet.



Scientists suggest that several other factors have also contributed to increased use of refined sugar—development of new uses for sugar; higher income (which increases the demand for food and sugar-containing products); higher proportion of teens and subteens in the population who are likely to drink above-average quantities of soft drinks; and withdrawal of cyclamates from the market in 1970 and their partial replacement with sugar.

For comparative purposes, the national trends in consumption of total carbohydrates (including sugar), protein, fat, and food energy as measured in calories, were also reviewed.

People are using less flour—and eating fewer cereal products. The total carbohydrates provided by the U.S. food supply has declined by about 25 percent since early this century, according to the report. The caloric level has dropped only about five to ten percent since the early 1900's—currently averaging about 3300 calories per person per day.

Protein is now near the record levels, reported in the early 1900's, around 100 grams per day. Fat also is at its peak, having increased about one-fourth over the past six decades to a level of approximately 155 grams per day.

HELPING OUT IN THE STATES

Extension Service and—

the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program

Four years ago, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program was developed by the Extension Service, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. More than 8,900 aides were employed under the program serving in 1,500 counties, independent cities and on Indian reservations in the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The aides, trained by Extension home economists, reach out to low-income families and offer help. They can identify because they are a part of the community--they speak the language and understand where help is needed.

Records were kept by extension aides on food consumed at six month intervals in the areas where the aides have been working with families on their food habits. The "food recall" showed an increase in the daily consumption of milk, fruit, and vegetables.

Each state and each group of extension leaders develop their own statewide projects--leaders in each area try to relate to the problems within their area. Some of the projects have been so successful that the leaders have shared ideas with the other states.

...in Illinois: Extension homemakers launched a statewide project in Wise Food Buying. Group meetings on nutrition education were held in housing projects, public aid offices, and migrant worker areas.

...in North Dakota: Extension has participated in the development of a computerized nutrition shopping program to be conducted in four stores. The consumer feeds information about her family, number of servings she wants, and the money she plans to spend, into the computer. Then she receives a suggested marketing list that is nutritionally balanced.

...in Washington state: A new food buying game developed by Extension agents and a health educator is proving popular and useful as an educational tool. Over 2,000 sets of the game, called "Checkstand", have been sold. One homemaker commented that the game really changed her buying habits.

COMMENTS & INQUIRIES TO:

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